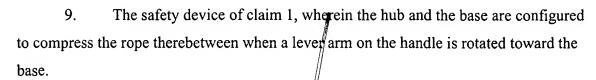WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   A safety device, comprising:

a base;

a handle pivotally mounted on the base;

a cleat pivotally mounted on the base; and

a rope routed into the device and between the cleat and a bearing surface on the base, then between the cleat and a hub on the handle, then around the hub and between the hub and another bearing surface on the base, then between the cleat and the hub again, and then out of the device.

2.   The safety device of claim 1, further comprising a cover connected to the base, wherein the cover and a portion of the base are disposed on opposite sides of the handle, the cleat, and the rope.

3.   The safety device of claim 2, wherein the cover is pivotally mounted on the base and pivots between an open position, providing access to respective gaps defined between the hub, the cleat, and the bearing surfaces on the base, and a closed position, spanning the gaps.

4.   The safety device of claim 3, wherein respective openings in the cover and the base align to receive a fastener when the cover occupies the closed position.

5.   The safety device of claim 4, wherein the handle and the base define a pivot axis, and the cleat is disposed between the pivot and the opening in the base.

6.   The safety device of claim 1, wherein the hub is eccentrically mounted on the base.

7.   The safety device of claim 6, wherein the hub is bounded by a perimeter having an arcuate portion and a straight portion, and the straight portion is nearest a pivot axis defined between the hub and the base.

8.   The safety device of claim 7, wherein the hub is configured like a sheave along the arcuate portion of its perimeter.

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9.   The safety device of claim 1, wherein the hub and the base are configured to compress the rope therebetween when a lever arm on the handle is rotated toward the base.

10.   The safety device of claim 9, wherein the hub and the cleat and the base are configured to compress the rope between the hub and the cleat and between the cleat and the base when the lever arm on the handle is suddenly rotated away from the base.

11.   A method of securing a safety device relative to a rope, comprising the steps of:

    providing a base with a bearing member;

    pivotally mounting a first member on the base;

    pivotally mounting a second member on the base;

    routing the rope between the bearing member and the first member, then between the first member and the second member, then about the second member and between the second member and the bearing member, and then between the second member and the first member again.

12.   A method of securing a safety device relative to a rope, comprising the steps of:

    providing a base with a bearing member;

    pivotally mounting a first member on the base in such a manner that the first member and the bearing member define a first gap therebetween;

    pivotally mounting a second member on the base in such a manner that the second member and the first member define a second gap therebetween, and the second member and the bearing member define a third gap therebetween;

    routing the rope through the first gap, then through the second gap, then about the second member and through the third gap, and then through the second gap again.

13.   The method of claim 12, wherein the first member is pivotally mounted in eccentric fashion on the base, so the first gap has a width that varies as a function of orientation of the first member relative to the base.

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14.   The method of claim 13, wherein the second member is pivotally mounted in eccentric fashion on the base, so the third gap has a width that varies as a function of orientation of the second member relative to the base.

15.   The method of claim 14, wherein the second gap has a width that varies as a function of both orientation of the first member relative to the base and orientation of the second member relative to the base.

16.   The method of claim 12, wherein the second member is pivotally mounted in eccentric fashion on the base, so the third gap has a width that varies as a function of orientation of the second member relative to the base.

17.   The method of claim 16, wherein the second gap also has a width that varies as a function of orientation of the second member relative to the base.